

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



NUTRITION

Published Monthly by the
Production and Marketing Administration
With the Approval of the Director, Bureau of the Budget

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

News Letter

NUMBER 51

WASHINGTON, D. C.

OCTOBER 1946

CAN MAN WIN HIS FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

This is the major question confronting the FAO Conference that is in session in Copenhagen as we go to press. In August we sent a fact sheet on the Conference to all persons on the Nutrition News Letter mailing list. Of interest to you also is the "World Food Survey," prepared by FAO for delegates to the Copenhagen Conference. A few highlights of the Survey follow:

Only one-third of the world's people normally get enough to eat. In peace years just before the war, half of the people were seriously undernourished, subsisting at a level of food consumption not high enough to maintain normal health, allow for normal growth of children, or furnish enough energy for normal work. During the same period one-sixth of the world's population was eating at a marginal level. To feed the world properly, tremendous increases in food production will be needed. These statements are substantiated by more detailed scientific findings of the Survey. The report provides background for the long-range world food policy proposals considered by the delegates from 42 member countries.

The delegation from the United States included 5 Congressional advisers and 17 advisers from various agencies and organizations. It is of interest to News Letter readers that Dr. Hazel K. Stiebeling, Chief of the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, USDA, and Dr. Faith M. Williams, Director, Staff on Foreign Labor Conditions, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, were among the advisers. Dr. Stiebeling, as a member of the Standing Advisory Committee on Nutrition of FAO, left early for Copenhagen to attend a session of that committee which opened August 23.

SPECIFICALLY, HOW CAN WE HELP

The agenda for the FAO Conference, reports from UNRRA, and other sources of information on the hunger that still exists in many countries are evidence

that the fight against famine is not over. This is merely a rest period between rounds. The last crops to be gathered, those from the Northern Hemisphere, will all be harvested in October, so world-wide crop production can soon be reported. The information needed for predicting the extent of the world food shortage for the coming winter and for planning new rounds in the fight against famine is, then, nearing completion.

We have been warned all along that the United States has not yet finished its job of sharing food with other Nations. The extent of new demands against our supplies, the timing of these demands, and the kinds of food that hungry Nations will need have been and still are the unknown quantities in the agricultural equation. Developments in the future of food relief will reach nutrition committees through more current sources of information than the News Letter. However, Secretary of Agriculture Clinton P. Anderson and Director of the President's Famine Emergency Committee Paul C. Stark have jointly stressed for many weeks the necessity of continued cooperation on the 5-point Famine Emergency Program:

1. Don't waste food.
2. Eat foods that are abundant.
3. Keep victory gardens producing.
4. Can and preserve food.
5. Salvage and re-use fats and oils.

Each phase of this 5-point program is important in itself, and together they provide the answer to the question often asked: "How can the individual consumer help allay world hunger?" In other issues of the News Letter we have laid special emphasis on conservation and the prevention of waste and on home food production and preservation. Various types of reports from nutrition committee chairmen indicate the ways in which these programs have been featured by State and local committees. Educational work on food conservation should continue after the 1946 gardening and preserving season has ended. And as we seem always to have some abundances, and

some shortages, the adjustments that the individual homemaker can make to scanty or full supplies of different kinds of food provide another important year-round program for nutrition committee emphasis.

The following foods are expected to be in plentiful supply throughout the greater part of the United States during October: Potatoes, onions, lemons, canned citrus juice (single strength), fall apples, pears, celery, and turkeys. Every effort should be made to encourage the fullest possible use of these foods wherever they are abundant. Many consumers will respond to an appeal to use abundant foods so as to release the scarce, less perishable foods for sharing, especially when we know more about what and how much our country will be asked to share. Many homemakers are stimulated by menu suggestions and recipes that are new or are revived "old favorites." For instance, with onions now abundant, this would seem the time to feature recipes for such favorites as baked stuffed onions and hamburger broiled on onion rings. These and other ways of serving onions were doubtless pigeonholed for future reference during the shortage last year.

Most experienced homemakers are receptive to reminders and to new ideas on food combinations and methods of preparation. In addition there are always many new homemakers who are eager for ideas to help them solve the three-meal-a-day problem. A large proportion of the abundances might easily go home in the market baskets of these recent homemakers if the use appeal reached them through a local radio program, a food demonstration, a press release, or a pamphlet.

Alongside the abundances, there are shortage problems to solve. Fats will be short for many months and probably will not be in normal supply in the United States until at least late in 1947. The USDA is asking for continued re-use of edible fats and oils and turn-in of all fats after the edible value is gone. The excellent cooperation of many homemakers in cutting purchases of soap and fats to a minimum, using rendered fat in cooking, and saving every drop of used fat for the salvage campaign has been fully recognized and highly commended. It is important that this cooperation be extended to include a larger number. Paul C. Stark, in his capacity as Director of the Food Distribution Programs Branch, has said: "As long as

Americans use wisdom in stretching available oil products, holding purchases to actual needs and salvaging all kitchen fats possible, the acute shortage during the coming year can be definitely eased."

Many homemakers stopped turning in fats immediately after the end of the war. However, the continuing shortage of edible fats and the scarcity of soap soon convinced the majority of homemakers that the end of the war did not end the need to conserve fat supplies. Following the appeal of the President's Famine Emergency Committee for continued fat conservation, collections increased substantially. Nevertheless, a recent survey revealed that only 60 percent of the housewives interviewed were participating in the fat salvage program though the replies indicated that 99 percent recognized the need for fat salvage.

* * *

It would seem that many county and local nutrition committees that have been working actively on other phases of the famine emergency program might now concentrate on an educational program on minimum use of foods in short supply and maximum use of abundant foods. Reports of these and other activities of committees would be most welcome in the Nutrition Programs office for use here and also to share with other committees through the News Letter.

NUTRITION SURVEY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Of interest to nutritionists, teachers, and public health workers in the United States is a survey of the nutritional status of elementary school children in British Columbia. The following information, in part quoted, has been taken from the May 1946 issue of "British Columbia Schools," the official publication of the Department of Education, Province of British Columbia, Victoria:

"One of the first complete nutrition surveys to be undertaken on this continent was made this spring in British Columbia. Nutrition clinics were held in Vancouver, in Prince George, and in the Matsqui-Sumas-Abbotsford Educational Area. The purpose of the survey, which was conducted under the auspices of the Department of National Health and Welfare of the Canadian Government, was to make a Dominion-wide survey of the nutritional status of a large number of Canadian children in order to discover health defects caused by inadequate

diets. As part of a national nutrition campaign, it is expected that parents, teachers, and children will learn much from the clinics concerning the effects of food on health, and the necessity of meeting all the nutritional needs of the body by ensuring that the diet provides all required elements."

The article continues with a description of the survey as it was carried on in the Matsqui-Sumas-Abbotsford area, where between 300 and 400 children in the 6- to 10-year age group in 3 schools were included in the study. A complete 1-week diet record was secured from each of the children as a preliminary step. Each child was weighed and measured, and examined as to nutritional status. The article states: "The main points noted were posture, skeletal structure, muscular tone and adequacy of the flesh covering the bones, eyes, teeth, hair, tongue, and skin. Specially sought were clinical symptoms of dietary deficiencies, such as skin, gum, and eye conditions. Lastly the pupil went to the technicians' table where a blood sample was taken to be sent to Ottawa for analysis."

The detailed analysis of the study is being made in Ottawa. Meanwhile, a few preliminary findings have been reported: Certain common dietary deficiencies were noted, the most common being fish-liver oils, whole grain cereals, and green vegetables. The pupils in the school having the oldest, best developed lunch program showed a better average nutritional status than the pupils in the other two schools.

Cooperation of medical officers, nurses, laboratory technicians, nutritionists, and teachers made this nutrition survey possible. Afternoon and evening meetings, one for a professional group and others for parents and the general public, were well attended. When the detailed results are available, the practical findings will be widely featured through the schools and the local press. The ultimate goal is to have better-fed school children.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

TEXAS.—Early in the summer the State Nutrition Council announced plans for its annual meeting September 27-28. The tentative program included a session of the executive committee, special committee meetings, and a large general session for presenting an over-all, up-to-date picture of the food situation.

A preliminary report of some of the work of the Council's Committee on Nutrition in the School has been received. It consists of a detailed subject matter outline and bibliography developed to stimulate colleges to offer courses on nutrition education in the elementary school. The material has been used at a child development workshop at the North Texas State Teachers College in a course taken largely by elementary education and physical education majors. Two communities have also used the outline in connection with a tuberculosis program, and one of the Negro colleges has given a course based on the material. One of the special values of the outline is its practical coverage of basic scientific facts on nutrition, which enables the teacher to orient the group in a short time and then proceed with the educational and social implications of the subject. The committee is also developing nutritional material for inclusion in the elementary school curriculum.

"The Best Meals Your Money Can Buy" is the title of a 10-page processed pamphlet published recently through the facilities of the Texas State Department of Health. The content of the pamphlet was prepared by the State Nutrition Council.

LOUISIANA.—The June issue of "Lifting the Lid," distributed by the State Nutrition Committee, reported activities of the Allen, Franklin, Lafourche, LaSalle, Ouachita, St. Landry, West Baton Rouge, and Winn Parish Nutrition Committees. In each of these parishes, the nutrition committee had been laying all its emphasis on the famine emergency campaign. A few of the many ideas used to feature the need for conservation were window displays, poster contests, food demonstrations, original slogans, fliers, and stickers. The report of the State Nutrition Committee indicates that some of the parish committees had been reorganized and reactivated by the challenge of the food emergency, though not all that were known to be carrying on a successful program had made reports.

NEW MEXICO.—At the July meeting of the State Nutrition Committee, the various standing committees summarized their accomplishments. The chairman of the Education Committee reported that a leaflet on child care, entitled "If Baby Could Talk," had been prepared, to be

printed in English and in Spanish. The content of the leaflet was reviewed and some minor changes were made. The Nutrition Committee voted in favor of printing 10,000 copies of the leaflet in English and 10,000 copies in Spanish.

The Food Preservation Committee gave a detailed report on the food preservation workshop held at Las Cruces, March 19-21, under the sponsorship of the State Nutrition Committee. (See May 1946 Nutrition News Letter, p. 3.)

A representative of the Nutrition Committee who attended a conference called by the State Department of Education in Santa Fe, May 3 and 4, participated in a panel discussion on "Improvement of the Training of Teachers for Rural Areas." One point made was the need for nutrition education for rural teachers to help them understand community nutrition problems.

There was discussion of a plan made in September 1944 for the State Nutrition Committee to prepare and make recordings of radio talks on nutrition subjects, to be used by the PTA on local stations. It was decided to revive this plan if members of the PTA still have use for these radio programs.

NEW MATERIAL (Sample enclosed)

"National School Lunch Program," PA-19. This 4-page USDA folder, prepared by the Production and Marketing Administration, states briefly and clearly the facts needed by a prospective program sponsor interested in taking advantage of funds available under the National School Lunch Act. For additional copies, write to Office of Information, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

NEW MATERIALS (Samples not enclosed)

"School Lunch Facilities—One Room School." This 21-page processed publication of USDA, prepared by the Production and Marketing Administration, contains information that applies particularly to the one-room school serving lunch to about 25. It deals with the construction of cupboards and movable tables, the selection of both large and small equipment, and with safety, health and sanitation measures. Included also are drawings of floor plans (to scale) that show suitable placing of equipment for efficient preparation and serving of lunches, for a "meal load" of 18 to 25 persons. Larger scale drawings (sheets 14 x 20 inches) of the same floor plans may be ordered separately.

In ordering this bulletin on school lunch facilities or the separate, large scale drawings, specify "For one-room school, meal load 18-25." Send requests to School Lunch Division, Food Distribution Programs Branch, PMA, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

"School Lunch Facilities Manual." This is the over-all title of a series of separate sheets (14 x 20 inches) containing floor plans for school lunch kitchens equipped to prepare lunches for groups ranging from 50 to 500. Each of the floor plans is developed around a specified "meal load" according to the size of the school. For instance, one sheet contains a plan for a new kitchen addition to a school with from 2 to 4 classrooms and a meal load of 50 to 100 persons. Another is for a plan for converting a classroom to a kitchen and dining room, in a 4- to 6-room school; the meal load in this case is 100 to 150. In ordering school lunch floor plans, indicate the approximate number to be served lunches. Send requests to School Lunch Division, Food Distribution Programs Branch, PMA, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

"School Lunch Recipes for 100" is the title of a set of 5 x 8 cards prepared by the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics. This card file includes 67 basic recipes, suggestions for using the recipes, simple directions for using dry skim milk and evaporated milk, dried egg, and soya flour and grits. There are recipes for soups and chowders, main dishes, vegetables, salads and salad dressings, breads, desserts, and sauces. The plan is to publish additional school lunch recipes from time to time in the same form so that they may be added to the file. Available from the State Offices of Production and Marketing Administration and from the Office of Information, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

Sincerely yours,

M L Wilson

M. L. Wilson, Chief
Nutrition Programs

W H Sebrell

W. H. Sebrell, Associate Chief
Nutrition Programs